A Stakeholder Perspective on Appalachian TMDLs

Evan Hansen

Downstream Strategies

October 4, 2000

Two kinds of stakeholder processes

- West Virginia TMDL Stakeholder Committee
  - Statewide
  - Recommend policy

- Cheat TMDL Stakeholder Group
  - Single watershed
  - Participate in and possibly improve a TMDL

WV TMDL Stakeholder Committee members

- Agriculture/forestry
- Environmental
- Industry
- Mining/oil and gas
- Municipal/sewer/PSD
- State government
- Watershed/sportsman

WV TMDL Stakeholder Committee mission

To produce consensus-based recommendations to assist the DEP director in implementing an effective and fair state TMDL program

Key issues

- 303(d) listing and de-listing
  - How much data?
  - Collected by whom?
  - In what manner?
- TMDL development
  - What are fair allocations of pollutant reductions?
- TMDL implementation
  - How to ensure cooperation of agencies other than DEP?

Cheat TMDL stakeholder process

- Came out of EPA's public meeting at start of TMDL process (early 1999)
- Professional facilitator through CVI
- Members:
    - Watershed organization (Friends of the Cheat)
    - Coal company
    - Electric utility
    - Recreation industry
    - Forestry industry
    - University experts
    - Interested residents

Original goals

- Collect and submit local data to modelers in California
- Generally participate in TMDL development process

Goals evolved into…

- Assess data loaded into the model
- Assess new AMD equations
- Assess calibrated model
- Submit allocation recommendations to EPA
- Jumpstart implementation

Lessons (1):
why process is working

- EPA Region 3 support
- Well respected watershed organization
- History of cooperation in watershed
- Funding (Canaan Valley Institute)
- Allocation not very contentious

Lessons (2): challenges

- Attracting balance of stakeholders
- Technical TMDL issues don't interest everybody

Lessons (3): interesting outcomes

- Considerable interest in learning details of data and model
- Group confidence in AMD model was a sticking point
- Recommended targeting nonpoint sources as much as possible

The promise of a balanced, active stakeholder group

- Better data and model
- Implementation more likely
  - Agencies more willing to invest if local interest in TMDL
  - Industries more willing to invest if they consider the process to be fair
  - Lawsuits are less likely
- Cleaner water